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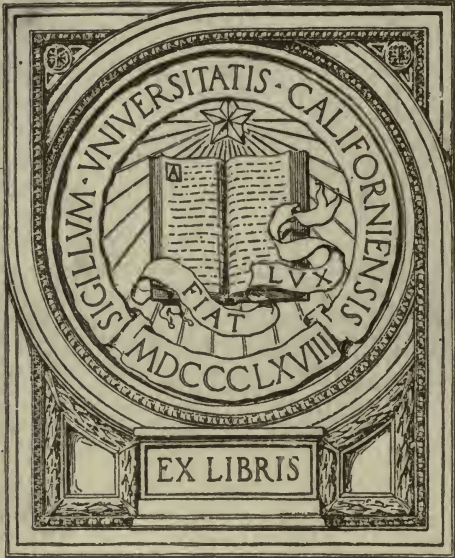
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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

In a previous article the educational process was considered from the standpoint of individual development. The individual was regarded as a term in a morphological series extending back to the beginning of life upon the planet. The physical, social, and psychological influences exerted upon that series, and producing the modification of form and function which has progressively adapted its members to their physical and social environment, were denominated educational factors, and the whole process of organic development was considered as essentially an educational process. That is to say, the education of the individual was presented as an evolutionary process extending beyond the school, and beyond the life of the individual; beginning, in fact, with the protoplasmic organism and culminating in the life experience of the existing individual who, with comparatively few of his ancestors, has been subjected to the special set of influences known as education in the narrow sense—that is, the education of the school. The school education of the individual was thus seen to be merely a factor in a biological, psychic, and social or moral process of development, and yet a factor which undertakes to control, and to a considerable degree does control, that process. It was shown to be the conscious and, from the standpoint of economy, the culminating phase of a process begun, carried on to, and influenced thru the school period, and the remaining life of the individual, by the forces of nature. In the present article our purpose is to sketch the process of social development, and to consider the relation of the school to the evolution of society.

Society, or better a social group—tribe, state, nation, or race—may be conceived as a unit having its origin in time, and having its own peculiar experience and history. Like the individual, each social group has been subjected to external and internal influences which have produced its peculiar spirit and

organization. The totality of these influences must be credited with having brought about the entire series of social changes which have progressively adapted the social group to its physical and societary environment. In other words, the evolution of the social group, or of society, is a process similar to that of the evolution of the individual. Social progress, or what Mr. Herbert Spencer calls superorganic evolution, may, like the evolution of the individual, be looked upon as essentially an educational process. In social evolution, however, the recipient of the evolutionary—that is, educational—influences is primarily the social group and not the individual. We may thus be warranted in speaking of the education of society, or of a people, as well as of the education of a person. In such education the school is merely a device of intelligence to guide and hasten social development in the direction of a desired end. The place and function of the school will most clearly appear, however, when we have analyzed the social evolutionary process.

I shall not stop here to argue that the doctrine of evolution applies to social development as well as to the development of organic forms. This is assumed. Mr. Herbert Spencer and other students of society and social institutions have shown, not only that there is a general evolution of things social, but also that the theory of natural selection applies in all its details to the development of social groups. The factors are the same as in organic evolution, namely, variation, heredity, and the struggle for existence, but variation and heredity are social rather than biological, and the struggle is primarily a conflict of group with group instead of a conflict of individual with individual. In this conflict the fittest group, not necessarily the best, survives. We may, therefore, speak of the natural selection of social groups, as we have spoken of the natural selection of individual organisms. Within the group there goes on, of course, a selective process with reference to individuals, ideas, customs, laws, and institutions. The factors here, too, are homologous to those in organic evolution. There is no difference in principle. The law of evolution, then, we may assume, is exemplified in the progress of every tribe,

state, nation, or race, and is clearly displayed in the development of all products of human thought and action. "The advance from the simple to the complex, thru a process of successive differentiations," says Mr. Spencer, "is seen alike in the earliest changes of the universe to which we can reason our way back, and in the earliest changes which we can inductively establish; it is seen in the geologic and climatic evolution of the earth, and of every single organism on its surface; it is seen in the evolution of humanity, whether contemplated in the civilized individual, or in the aggregations of races; it is seen in the evolution of society, in respect alike of its political, its religious, and its economical organization; and it is seen in the evolution of all those endless concrete and abstract products of human activity which constitute the environment of our daily life."¹

Holding in mind, then, the conception of a developing social group, we may describe the social evolutionary process which results primarily in the education of the social group, in the same manner that was employed in outlining the development of the individual. The process of group development, like that of individual development, may be divided into natural or genetic, and artificial or telic evolution. The natural evolution of the social group, so far as it is progressive, has resulted from the operation of external causes, or from the activities of the members of the group undirected towards a social end. Natural social evolution is a resultant of the reactions of the group upon its environment, and the activities of its members directed towards the satisfaction of their desires without thought of the effect of these activities upon social development. It is wholly unintended. Looking back at the historical development of society, for instance, we can see that social progress has sometimes been achieved without its being aimed at by anybody. This phase of the development of a social group corresponds exactly to the natural development of the biological organism. It is the education which Nature gives to the social group thru its unconscious experience with its objective and subjective environment.

¹ *First principles*, p. 359.

The true character of this natural, or genetic, social progress, and its inferiority to artificial, or telic, progress, has been more clearly set forth by Professor Ward than by any other writer.² "The primary characteristic of genetic social progress," he says, "is that it results from the actions of men that directly flow from their efforts to satisfy their desires. It is this, too, which gives it its distinctively genetic character. Genesis is becoming, and whatever is genetically produced is the result of a *vis a tergo* molding it into shape by successive impacts. The impinging body is in direct and intimate contact with the one that is being molded. The change produced is gradual, and the process is one of development or evolution. Social progress is in this respect analogous to organic progress, or even to cosmic progress. It is never sudden or rapid. It does not take place by leaps or strides. Increment after increment is slowly added to social as to animal structures, and in the course of ages habits, customs, laws, and institutions are changed, or abolished and replaced by others. As the object of all these activities is always the fuller satisfaction of desire, and as such satisfaction results in self-preservation and race-continuance, the effect in the long run, under the ever-present law of selection, is to produce superior races. This effect, however, is biologic, or rather ethnologic. The sociologic effect is to adapt the environment, *i. e.*, to improve the conditions of existence. This is social progress, but, like organic progress, it may and does result in the extinction of deficient and the preservation of efficient races and institutions."

In another place the form of social progress now under consideration has been called by Professor Ward passive, or negative, social progress. "Society is regarded," he says, "as passive in the sense of being simply acted upon by the forces that surround it and operate within it. It is conceived as negative from the absence of any forces extraneous to those regular natural forces operating in the direction of their limitation or modification."³ The natural process of group development, then, is exactly parallel with that we have called the natural education of the individual.

² See his *Outlines of sociology*, chapters x and xii.

³ *Dynamic sociology*, Vol. I. p. 56.

The natural education, or evolution, of the social group, the social genesis, is produced by factors operating from without and within, and which may be designated as external and internal factors. The external factors are physical (climate, configuration of land surface, flora, fauna, etc.), and societary (tribes, states, nations, or races with which a group is brought into contact). Those acting within the group, that is, the personal and institutional influences affecting the development of the group, may be called social. Hence natural social evolution may be divided, with respect to the forces operating to produce unintended progressive changes, into physical, societary, and social.

As to the physical education of the social group, it is obvious that modifications of social structure and character are produced by topographical, climatic, floral, and faunal influences exerted upon it. The observance of the multiform results of such influences in the various human societies has led certain sociologists to endeavor to explain society from the standpoint of the physical environment. Buckle, for instance, attributed enormous social results to the influence of physical agents.⁴ He held that the general aspect of nature—by which he meant “those appearances which, tho presented chiefly to the sight, have, thru the medium of that or other senses, directed the association of ideas, and hence in different countries have given rise to different habits of national thought”—produces inevitable and far-reaching results in stimulating the imagination and suggesting the innumerable superstitions which have stood in the way of advancing knowledge. “As, in the infancy of the people, the power of such superstition is supreme,” he says, “it has happened that the various aspects of Nature have caused corresponding varieties in the popular character, and have imparted to the national religion peculiarities which, under certain circumstances, it has been impossible to efface.”⁵

To the character of the climate, soil, and food he ascribed in large measure the production and distribution of wealth upon which the progress of civilization so largely depends. Undoubtedly outward physical circumstances have had much to

⁴ See his *History of civilization in England*, Vol. I. chap. ii.

⁵ *Op. cit.*

do with national peculiarities, and the variations of primitive communities are unquestionably due, to a considerable extent, to the geographic factors operating upon them. The group, then, undergoes a natural physical development, or education, as does the individual.

| The aim, or goal, of the natural physical process we have been considering is the adaptation of the social group to its physical environment. | It is identical with the aim in the natural physical education of the individual. The means are also the same, and the method is natural selection. The outcome of the whole process is slow modification of the social group in the direction of adaptation to its physical environment. The factors of the process are physical agents.

Physical agents, however, are not the only external factors in the development of a social group. In addition to these must be considered the social groups which thru friendly or hostile contact exert an influence upon the developing group, like that which one individual exerts upon another. | There can be no question but that in the evolution of a social group societary influences, that is, those arising from contact with other social groups, have been quite as effective as the physical influences. | There is a class of sociological writers who are disposed to exalt these societary influences to the highest rank among the factors of social development. Gumplowicz, the Austrian sociologist, for instance, contends that the social process begins with the interaction of social groups. "When two or more distinct groups come in contact," he says, "when each enters the spheres of the other's operations, a social process always ensues. So long as one unitary, homogeneous group is not influenced by or does not exert influence upon another it persists in the original primitive state. Hence, in distant quarters of the globe, shut off from the world, we find hordes in a state as primitive, probably, as that of their forefathers a million years ago. . . . But as soon as one group is exposed to the influence of another, the interplay of mutual forces ensues inevitably, and the social process begins."⁶ Too much influence is here ascribed to the societary factors. Nevertheless,

⁶ *Outlines of sociology* (Eng. trans.), p. 85.

it is easily seen that the reactions of the hostile and friendly intercourse of one group with another manifest themselves in the greater cohesion, the better organization, of the groups involved.

| The goal of the development of a social group, so far as the present phase of the process is concerned, is adaptation to its societary environment. | There is still no conscious use of means, and no intelligent method. Natural selection still holds undisputed sway. The struggle for survival usually takes the form of war. | War, therefore, has served the same purpose in the development of social groups [as physical combat in the development of individuals. "We must recognize the truth," says Mr. Spencer, "that the struggles for existence between societies have been instrumental to their evolution. Neither the consolidation and re-consolidation of small groups into large ones; nor the organization of such compound and doubly compound groups; nor the concomitant developments of those aids to a higher life which civilization has brought; would have been possible without inter-tribal and inter-national conflicts. | Social co-operation is initiated by joint defense and offense; and from the co-operation thus initiated, all kinds of co-operations have arisen. Inconceivable as have been the horrors caused by this universal antagonism which, beginning with the chronic hostilities of small hordes tens of thousands of years ago, has ended in the occasional vast battles of immense nations, we must nevertheless admit that without it the world would still have been inhabited only by men of feeble types, sheltering in caves and living on wild food." ⁷

| It should be observed, in passing, however, that as a method of social progress war is not to be commended. | It is irrational, illustrating the waste characteristic of the methods of nature. To call it a method is to speak figuratively. It is employed in the realm of natural social evolution in which, as has been shown, it is an accommodation of language to speak of aim or means or method. | It simply affords an illustration of the operation of the blind forces of nature which results in adaptation to environment, whether such adaptation is progressive or not.

⁷ *Principles of sociology*, Vol. II, p. 241.

Turning now to the third division of natural, or genetic, social progress,—that is, the social,—we find that within the group are forces working unconsciously, so far as social evolution is concerned, and yet effectually, in promoting the improvement of social organization. Such influences have been called psycho-social.⁸

Thru these psycho-social influences the individuals within a group must to some extent determine the general form and character of the group. Reference has already been made to the interaction of the group and its members. As the group may affect the character of its members, so the members will affect the development of the group. | Individual variation, if it happens to be advantageous to the social group, is, by a process of social selection, utilized as a means of development. | Ideas and habits manifesting themselves in a particular member of the group are, by the laws of suggestion and imitation, spread thruout the group; and, when they prove to be advantageous in its struggle with other groups, they become a factor in its survival. || So the members of the social group, while serving their own individual ends, incidentally promote social improvement. | The natural inequality of the members of a group, the different degrees of utility in customs, institutions, etc., give an opportunity for the play of natural selection within the group, and thus by wholly natural laws,—the laws of suggestion, imitation, repetition, social selection, etc.,—the group is gradually raised to a higher plane.

This brief account of the natural development of the social group, or what may be called its natural education, may serve our purpose as well as a more extended discussion of the laws and causes of the social process. Let us now cast a brief glance at the same process under its artificial, or telic aspect.

| The evolution of a social group becomes artificial, or telic, only when it takes place as a result of human action consciously aimed at improving the condition of the group. | It depends entirely upon a social teleology practiced either by one or more individuals of the group, or by the group collectively. In the first instance, the process is due to the foresight and socially

⁸ Gumpłowicz, *op. cit.*

purposive efforts of one or more individuals, and in the second, to the consciousness of the social group manifesting itself in efforts to promote its own welfare. The artificial, or telic, phase of the social process consequently falls naturally into two divisions, which we may call individuotelic and sociotelic.

Individuotelic social progress must not be conceived as the result of the whole range of individuo-teleology, or what Professor Ward has called individual teleosis. It is due only to that form of individual teleosis which is applied to the achievement of a social end. Individual teleology has, of course, been practiced ever since the dawn of intellect. The instances in which it has been applied to social development, however, are rare. Certain individuals in the past—kings, emperors, statesmen, and the like—have identified their own interests with those of the social group to which they belonged, and have in consequence employed design in their endeavor to achieve a definite social end. In still rarer instances individuals have made the welfare of their social group the center of their interests and the object of their endeavors, and, having conceived an ideal destiny for their group, or an ideal humanity, have striven consciously to attain it. Such individuals as are represented by these two classes furnish us the only examples of individuotelic social progress.

When the social group itself becomes conscious of its development, projects an aim, and sets about the intelligent employment of means to realize its aim, the process of development becomes sociotelic. Sociotelic development is exactly parallel to what I have called the autotelic development of the individual. It takes place only when the social group takes its affairs into its own hands, consciously formulates its own purposes, and strives to accomplish them in the same manner as an individual seeks to promote his own welfare. Obviously this is the highest phase of social development, the phase in which there is the highest possibility of organizing and employing socially progressive forces, of which education is potentially the greatest, to avoid friction and eliminate waste. It is to society exactly what the self-conscious phase of his own education is to the individual.

We have now briefly analyzed and described the process of development with regard to social groups. It has not been our purpose to present in detail an explanation of social development, but rather to sketch a background which may serve to throw into clearer perspective certain questions in regard to the education of the schools. The analysis presented may be arranged diagrammatically in the following form:

EDUCATION OF THE SOCIAL GROUP	AIM	MEANS	METHOD
Natural or Genetic.....	Adaptation	Environment	Selection
Physical.....	Adaptation to physical environment	Physical environment	Natural selection of social groups
Societary	Adaptation to societary environment	Societary environment	Same as above
Social.....	Adaptation to physical and societary environment	Internal environment	Same as above with social selection within the group
Artificial or Telic.....	Adaptation(ideal)	Artificial environment	The methods of intelligence
Individuo-telic.....	Production of ideal social type individually conceived	Artificial environment, including the school	Legislation, education, etc., employed by one or more individuals
Socio-telic.....	Production of ideal social type socially conceived	Artificial environment, especially the school system	Same as above, consciously employed by the group

In the above analysis of social evolution, as in the analysis of individual development, the order is in general from the lowest or least economical phase of the process to the highest. That is to say, the classification is arranged with reference to the relative importance and value of the various stages of the process, when judged from the standpoint of possible effectiveness and economy. Physical, societary, and social influences, in the order named, are supposed to represent an ascending

scale of efficiency in promoting the development of the group. Artificial development is regarded as potentially superior to the natural process, for it is only in this phase of social development that intelligence is applied and economy practiced in the realization of a social end. The process reaches its highest manifestation in sociotelic evolution. The most thoro application of the principle of economy is possible only in this stage. I say possible, for the reason that, in the lowest stages of sociotelic development, the economy practiced *may* be greater than that employed in the succeeding stage. Under a benevolent despotism, for instance, social organization may be far better than in an incipient democracy. Every people that has undertaken to order its own activities for the achievement of its own ends has begun by manifesting a low degree of social intelligence. It has stumbled and blundered like an infant learning to walk. It is no wonder that, on observing the flounderings of young republics, many political writers have been disposed to think that a democratic form of government is inferior to an autocratic form. Such, however, is here shown not to be the case. However well ordered by a benevolent despot the activities of a people may be, they are not self-ordered, and consequently the people are not on the road to the development of a social intellect which is to be a permanent and increasingly effective instrument in promoting social welfare. The glory of a democracy is in its possibilities.

The sociotelic phase, then, is the culminating phase of social development. As before remarked, it is to the group what the autotelic phase of individual development is to the individual. It is that stage in which all the lower agencies and methods may be consciously employed to accelerate the evolutionary process by eliminating friction and the consequent waste of energy. As the highest plane of individual development is reached when the individual himself becomes conscious of the process, formulates his own purposes and consciously avails himself of the best means of improving his own character, so the highest possibility of social economy is attained only when the group becomes conscious of its evolutionary process and proceeds to promote its own welfare in the exact manner

adopted by an intelligent individual. Society, says Professor Ward, "should imagine itself an individual, with all the interests of an individual, and becoming fully *conscious* of these interests it should pursue them with the same indomitable *will* with which the individual pursues his interests. Not only this, it must be guided, as he is guided, by the social *intellect*, armed with all the knowledge that all individuals combined, with so great labor, zeal, and talent have placed in its possession, constituting the social intelligence."⁹

Now it must be confessed that modern society is far from having attained the condition here implied. It has barely entered upon the rational stage of social evolution. Here and there may indeed be found vague indications of a social consciousness as manifested in some example of sociotelic action. A democratic form of government, certain instances of legislation, and the social employment of an educational system for promoting social welfare may be cited as initial steps in the sociotelic field. But there is as yet no true democracy, and the legislative and educational factors, tho popularly designed for the advancement of general well-being, are still almost universally employed as means for conserving or promoting personal or class interests. Social progress has hitherto taken place almost entirely under the operation of natural forces, and has consequently illustrated the wastefulness and extravagance observed in the lowest processes of nature. The progress which has been achieved by modifications of the material environment, by legislative enactments, and by systems of education has been usually the unintended result of movements to promote other ends. It has not been the object primarily sought to be attained. Neither education, legislation, nor the subjection of nature can produce the most wholesome effects as factors in social development until they are scientifically ordered by the social consciousness. We are just now entering upon the sociotelic, or socially conscious, stage of social evolution, the possibilities of which are almost undreamed of.

Now, in the progress of society thru the various stages of evolution, what are the place and function of the school? The

⁹ *Psychic factors of civilization*, p. 324.

school doubtless originated as a means of hastening individual development, and was used without any thought of its social value. Thruout its history it has chiefly been regarded as an instrument to be employed in realizing individual and institutional ends. In our own country it was at first chiefly employed by the Church. Not until we had won our independence was it consciously used as a means of realizing distinctively and primarily social ends. Even then the consciousness of its social value rested with a few educators and statesmen, who had themselves formulated some conception of a social ideal towards which they were striving. It still awaits its ordered application by a thoroly conscious society to reveal its full value as a factor in social evolution. With the development of the social consciousness, it will become more and more the means *par excellence* whereby society may formulate its own purposes and further its own development. When we have planted in the schools the seeds of an ideal humanity, we may confidently depend upon its realization, for we have initiated a movement the inevitable result of which will be the attainment of the preconceived ideal. As Emerson has somewhere said, "the effect already blooms in the cause, and the fruit pre-exists in the seed."

Changes in the agencies employing the school have been accompanied by changes in the purpose for which it was employed. In America, for instance, the purpose of the school has been in turn religious, political, economic, moral, and social. Always, however, the idea of protection or defense has been emphasized as the function of education. The individual was to be protected against the wiles of that "old deluder Satan," or against the machinations of the demagog, or against his own rivals in the struggle for existence. Our institutions were to be guarded by education against the attacks of ignorance. The idea is embodied in the formula, "Education the safeguard of our institutions," or, "Education the bulwark of the Republic." This is all very well, but, as society becomes more conscious of its own interests and its own possibilities, it will be seen that the true function of the school, both individually and socially, is not negative, but positive; not

self-defense, but self-realization. Not the protection, but the perfection, of our institutions is the real function of education. Adequate performance of this function, however, is only possible in a society thoroly conscious of its activities and its interests.

√ The development of the social consciousness, then, is a desideratum of the greatest importance. If it is to the interest of the social group to put the individual in the way of educating himself, so that in his development means may be economically employed and time and energy saved, it is of almost infinitely greater importance that the group itself should advance rapidly towards the realization of a social consciousness which will result in the ordered utilization of all possible factors in social evolution. /

As has been shown, the factors in social development are the external and the internal, or the physical, the societary, and the social. The individually or socially conscious attempt to utilize any or all of these factors, to mold the members of a social group into conformity with a preconceived social ideal, is education in the conventional sense. | Education, therefore, from the social evolutionary point of view, is a means of social transformation. | The school is an instrument for modifying the character of society. | Whether this modification is in the direction of social improvement depends upon the ideas and ideals of those who handle the instrument. As a matter of fact, we may expect that education will always be directed in the interest of the ruling class. Despots, benevolent and otherwise, and dominant classes have consciously employed education for the purpose of molding society into conformity with a social ideal conceived by themselves. This ideal, however, embodied primarily their own interests, or the interests of their class or their favorite institutions, and not those of the social group in general. Only in a democracy is it possible for the people to take the educational instrument into their own hands, perfect it, and use it in the realization of a socially conceived ideal. This will be done only in proportion to the development of a social consciousness.

√ The development of a social consciousness, then, should be an

immediate and primary object of the school. Outside of school influences the growth of a social consciousness in the individual is likely to take place wholly as a natural, that is to say a slow, process. In the school it may be accelerated by the conscious effort of the teacher to impart knowledge and to develop interests and habits of thought that will result in the formation of a social consciousness in the individual. If our schools should turn out individuals properly equipped with social knowledge and feeling, and with the habit of considering social interests as primary, the social consciousness would rapidly integrate.

Supposing, however, a high development of the social or group consciousness, it cannot be manifested in social action to promote progress without some sort of social ideal towards which society may endeavor to move. The projection of a social ideal, or societary aim, then, must precede the conscious and effective social employment of educational means to accelerate progress. While the school is consciously endeavoring to develop the social consciousness, it must at the same time consciously assume the task of developing individuals in the direction of fitness for a rational social ideal. This it cannot do unless the teacher himself has a conception of the social ideal in the realization of which the school is a factor. Here, again, is suggested the value to the teacher of an acquaintance with the laws of the evolutionary process, individual and social.

The first great demand, then, in the endeavor to apply the principle of economy in social development, and thus to direct the social use of the educational factor, is a social ideal, or societary aim, towards which our educational system and pedagogical practices may be orientated. This is the primary requisite in directing the work of the school or in the criticism of its methods. The construction of such an aim has been variously attempted, but such attempts have usually been imaginative, rather than scientific. Plato, St. Augustine, Dante, Campanella, Sir Thomas More, Bacon, Bellamy, and many others have presented pictures of what they thought society ought to be. Modern scientific socialism has endeav-

ored to forecast what it must inevitably become. All of these projections of a future humanity are more or less visionary. In spite of the visionary character of past attempts, however, and of the acknowledged difficulties in attempting to forecast in any respect the course of future social development, we hold that the greatest service which modern social study can render pedagogy is to formulate on the basis of a scientific knowledge of the social process, and the latent possibilities of human life, a rational conception of an ideal humanity in the realization of which the educational factor may be consciously employed.

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